

# The College for Congregational Development

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The Most Reverend  
Melissa M. Skelton

# Who I am

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- The founder and creator of the **College for Congregational Development** (now 15+ years old)
- Archbishop (Retired) **The Anglican Church of Canada**
- Currently an **Assisting Bishop** for the **Diocese of Olympia** and **Bishop Provisional Designate in the Diocese of Olympia**
- Previously **Rector of St. Paul's Church, Seattle WA** and **Canon for Congregational Development, The Diocese of Olympia**
- **VP for Administration at General Seminary** (many years ago)

# What is the College for Congregational Development?

- A comprehensive program of congregational development for **teams of lay and clergy leaders**
- For congregations of **all sizes, locations and conditions**



# What does the College focus on?

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- Equipping lay and clergy teams to **lead development** in their parishes
- Emphasis on **learning frameworks** and **practicing the skills** that can be used in the parish



# Congregational Development

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Assisting congregations in becoming

**Healthier**

**More faithful**

**More effective**

Communities of Faith

# Congregational Development

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- That focus on and are faithful to **their unique purpose as congregations** which are local expressions of the body of Christ and which, with God's help, **gather people, deepen people's engagement with their baptismal identity and purpose and send them into the world** as witnesses to and **agents of transformation.**



# Congregational Development

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- That are connected and expressive of the **best of their ecclesial tradition**, ethos, and character.
- That are **self-renewing and responsive to the challenges and opportunities** around and before them.



# Congregational Development

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- That are **sustainable or working toward greater sustainability**, in terms of “fit” between the elements of their **organizational life** (identity, vision and goals, leadership, resources, culture, size, property, relationship to context, partnerships).



# Congregational Development

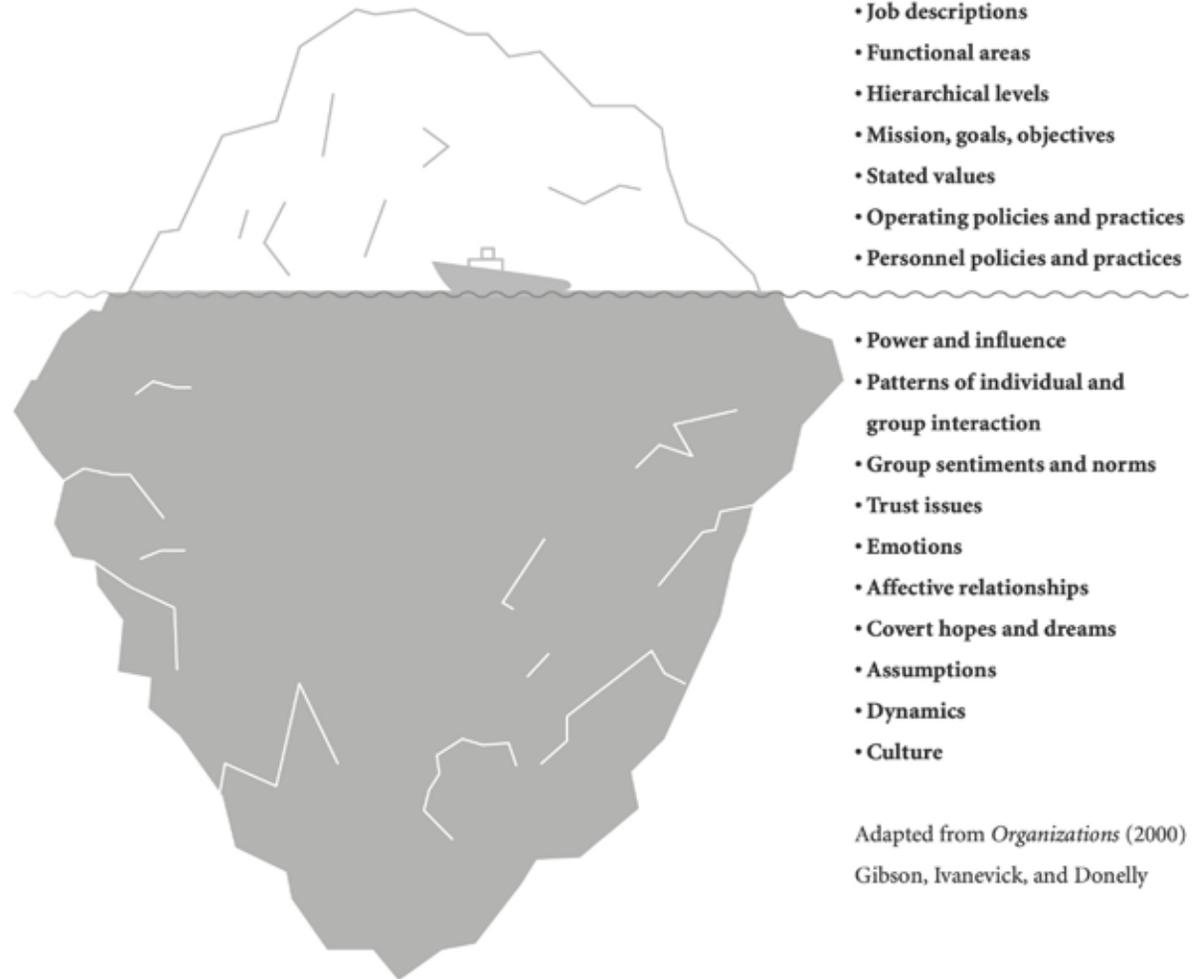
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- That **foster a culture** of transparency, collaboration, listening, trust, courage, openness, and flexibility and in which the congregation and its **leaders have a greater sense of choice.**



# Another way of thinking about it...

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Adapted from *Organizations* (2000)  
Gibson, Ivancevick, and Donnelly

# A brief exercise

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Discuss with others:

What one area (that I mentioned) do **you believe your congregation/parish needs to work on or develop?**



# What makes up the College

- Participation in **virtual and in-person training** (plenary learning, work in teams and individual work)
- **Two in-person weeks** over two summers
- **Readings** before and after each session
- **Back-home projects**
- **Support from the Diocese** in an ongoing way



# What is (some of) the content in the College?

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- **Change and transition** processes
- **Listening** processes and **facilitation tools**
- **Anglican identity**, ethos, and spirituality
- **Power, voice and influence** in the parish
- Congregational **identity and personality**
- **Trust development and conflict**
- **Intercultural** communication
- Learning about oneself as a **leader**
- **Faith development** in the parish
- Ways to engage with the **context/neighborhood**
- How to **experiment and learn as you go**

# Who are the trainers in the College?

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- **Practitioners** (from parishes of all sizes, locations and conditions and from diocesan staffs) who have **learned the material and have put it into practice in their congregations and dioceses.**
- **Not “outside experts”** or idea people who have interesting ideas but **little or no practical experience at the parish level.**
- **Parish Priests**
- **Lay people**
- **Canons to the Ordinary**
- **Canons for Congregational Vitality**
- **From all over the US and Canada**

# Participants in the College

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- **US Participants** from Olympia, Spokane, Rochester, Chicago, Indianapolis, Bethlehem, Atlanta, Maryland, Alaska, Northern California, California, Upper South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Central New York, Michigan, New York, Central Pennsylvania
- **Participants from The Anglican Church of Canada:** New Westminster, Ottawa, Territory of the People, British Columbia, Kootenay
- **International Participants** from The Anglican Diocese of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, The Episcopal Diocese of Northern Philippines
- College participants have included **Latinx, African American, Filipino, Indo-Canadian, Sri Lankan-Canadian, Caribbean Canadian, Caribbean, and Indigenous-Alaskan participants.**

# Current Sponsoring Dioceses

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- Diocese of Olympia
- Diocese of Atlanta
- Diocese of Indianapolis
- Diocese of Michigan
- Diocese of Chicago
- Diocese of Maryland
- Diocese of Rochester
- Diocese of Spokane

# What does a parish need to do?

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- **Identify a team** (will consist of a clergy person and 2-4 others who want to work on the parish's development)
- Be sure the **entire team can commit to the dates, times and effort required**



# The College in the EDNY



the College  
for Congregational Development

Still in the planning stage. Plans include 1) a summer **2023 week-long commuter** version of the **College in the Manhattan area** and a 2) summer **2023 residential** week-long regional training session in a different part of the Diocese.